

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY WASHINGTON. D.C. 20460

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MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Addressing Environmental Challenges for Small Businesses through

Strengthening Partnerships

FROM:

Lisa C. Lund, Director,

Office of Compliance

Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance

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Office of Small Business Programs

Office of the Administrator

TO:

Deputy Regional Administrators

The Office of Compliance (OC) and the Office of Small Business Programs (OSBP) are asking for your support to improve the way EPA helps small businesses understand and comply with environmental requirements. OC, with its strong network of regional Compliance Assistance Coordinators (CACs), and OSBP, through its own network of Small Business Regional Liaisons (Liaisons) and state Small Business Environmental Assistance Programs (SBEAPs), are working together to coordinate regional and state delivery of compliance information to small businesses. The first step in this joining of forces is to bring together the CACs and Liaisons at the 2010 Small Business Environmental Conference in Washington, DC on June 8-11. We are asking you to support this work.

Why Partner?

Section 507 of the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments (CAA) requires states to develop programs to help small businesses understand and comply with CAA compliance requirements. The state SBEAPs grew out of this statutory requirement. EPA's Asbestos and Small Business Ombudsman, part of OSBP, monitors these state programs. (For more information visit: http://www.epa.gov/sbo/507program.htm.) While most of the SBEAPs focus only on CAA requirements, they also see a clear need in other environmental media areas. The SBEAPs and the Environmental Council of States (ECOS) have turned to EPA to help them meet this demand.

Part of our answer to this request is to establish a partnership between multimedia compliance experts, OBSP and the SBEAPs. The goal of this partnership is to better identify, through the SBEAPs, the information needs of small business, and bring those needs to the

attention of headquarters and regional media program and compliance experts. Together they will identify where partners already have information they can share, expert speakers, websites, guidance documents, workshops, and other assistance materials that can be made available more broadly. To address needs where materials do not already exist, we would like to partner with media program experts at headquarters and in the regions to develop solutions to meet those needs.

This partnership will undoubtedly benefit both EPA and state assistance programs by virtue of the efficiencies it will bring, and most importantly, it will enhance delivery of compliance information to small businesses. It will enable the regions and states to readily share existing materials, and thus prevent partners from reinventing the wheel. It will also reduce costs associated with separate deliveries of materials or visits to small businesses by multiple EPA offices. Over the long term, we will all be better positioned to identify and collaborate on small business needs as they arise.

Next Step: Establishing the Partnership

In advance of the June Small Business Environmental Conference (www.sbeapconference.com), we asked all the regional CACs and Liaisons to begin organizing regional networks with representatives from their own state SBEAPs. The conference will be a venue for solidifying EPA's partnership with the SBEAPs. Time has been set aside at the conference for the newly forming regional networks to explore the drivers and barriers for improving compliance, and begin working together to develop innovative approaches to improving small business compliance. Our objective for the conference is for the group to develop goals and a plan for moving forward.

Sustaining the Partnership

We hope to continue the dialogue with the regional networks after the conference. The EPA Environmental Assistance Network, a task force composed of OC, OSBP and the EPA headquarters program offices, meets quarterly to coordinate EPA's compliance assistance work and will now include regional and state representatives from each of the regional networks, allowing for Agency-wide information exchange and shared problem solving.

Success in building a new EPA/state compliance assistance partnership depends on regional involvement. We ask for your support in encouraging your region's CACs and Liaisons to actively participate in this effort.

If you have any questions, please contact Seth Heminway, OC, at 202-564-7017 or Joan B. Rogers, OSBP, at 202-564-6568.

Attachments:

List of Regional Compliance Assistance Coordinators List of Small Business Regional Liaisons cc: Cynthia Giles, Assistant Administrator, OECA

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Regional Compliance Assistance Coordinators

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